

Message Text

PAGE 01 NATO 01732 252157Z
ACTION EUR-12

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SECDEF WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS 6977
USNMR SHAPE
USCINCEUR
USLOSACLANT
USDOCOSOUTH
JCS WASHDC
CSAF WASHDC
CINCUSAFE

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 1732

STATE PLEASE PASS TO SECRETARY'S PARTY ENROUTE BRUSSELS

DEPARTMENT FOR S/S AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO, AWACS, OCON
SUBJECT: NATO AEW: INITIAL REPORT OF MINISTERIAL MEETING

REF: USNATO 1727

1. THIS IS AN INITIAL SUMMARY REPORT OF THE DPC MINISTERIAL
MEETING ON NATO AEW, MARCH 25, 1977. COMMUNIQUE IS IN
REFTEL. A FULLER REPORT WILL FOLLOW SEPTTEL.

2. AFTER A LONG, FREQUENTLY ANIMATED MEETING LASTING UNTIL
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PAGE 02 NATO 01732 252157Z

NEARLY 8 P.M., MINISTERS FINALLY SETTLED ON A COMMUNIQUE
REFLECTING THEIR INABILITY TO AGREE ON THE PROGRAM INITIALLY
UNDER DISCUSSION, THEIR UNWILLINGNESS TO ABANDON NATO AEW,
AND THEIR DETERMINATION (ALTHOUGH IN WIDELY RANGING DEGREES)
TO FIND A WORKABLE SOLUTION TO THE PRESENT IMPASSE. UK
MINISTER MULLEY RESERVED THE POSITION OF HIS GOVERNMENT.

3. COMMENT: MULLEY'S RESERVATION IS CLEARLY DESIGNED
TO LEAVE OPEN THE DOOR FOR A UK DECISION TO "MAKE ITS
CONTRIBUTION" TO NATO AEW BY PROVIDING NIMRODS TO A

TWO-SYSTEM FORCE. EVEN THOUGH SUCH A DECISION COULD BE
TAKEN ANY TIME--AND PERHAPS VERY SOON--NEVERTHELESS
THE EXTENDED DISCUSSION HEIGHTENED MINISTERS' AWARENESS
OF THE NEED FOR A COOPERATIVE APPROACH. THIS MAY NOT
PROVE TO BE ENOUGH TO SAVE NATO AEW, BUT IT WAS
ENOUGH TODAY TO KEEP IT ALIVE.

IF THE MINISTERIAL HAS ACCOMPLISHED ONE THING, IT
HAS BEEN THE CLARIFICATION OF THE GERMAN POSITION.
MINISTER LEBER SAID THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC SAYS "YES"
TO AWACS BUT HE COULD NOT NOW AGREE TO A SPECIFIC
COST SHARE. HE EXPRESSED HIMSELF IN SUCH A WAY
AS TO LEAD US TO BELIEVE THAT HE THINKS, GIVEN ENOUGH
TIME, A FAVORABLE DECISION COULD BE EXPECTED FROM THE
BUNDESTAG. SYG LUNS ALSO AGREED, IN RESPONSE TO A
REQUEST BY LEBER, TO ASCERTAIN THE FRENCH POSITION.
END COMMENT.
STRAUSZ-HUPE

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED SECRETARY'S PARTY.

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